

### **REMARKS**

The Office Action mailed July 25, 2002 has been received and the Examiner's comments carefully reviewed. Claims 22-39, 46, 48-53, and 55 have been allowed. Applicants thank the Examiner for this notification. Claims 40 and 44 have been amended. Applicants have included herewith a document entitled, "VERSION WITH MARKINGS TO SHOW CHANGES MADE" to indicate how the claims have been amended. No new subject matter has been added. Claims 22-46 and 48-55 are currently pending. Applicants respectfully submit that the pending claims are in condition for allowance and request reconsideration of the application, as amended.

### **Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. §112**

The Examiner rejected claims 40-45 and 54 under 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph, as being incomplete for omitting essential steps, such omission amounting to a gap between the steps. The Examiner stated that the omitted steps are: the support device having some effect upon the animal that allows for the claimed function of reducing airflow impedance.

Applicants have amended claim 40 to clarify that the support device causes a portion of the first and second lateral vestibular walls to be supported so that respiratory airflow impedance is reduced. In light of the amendment clarifying the effect of the support device, Applicants respectfully submit that independent claim 40 and dependent claims 41-45 and 54 are now in condition for allowance.

### SUMMARY

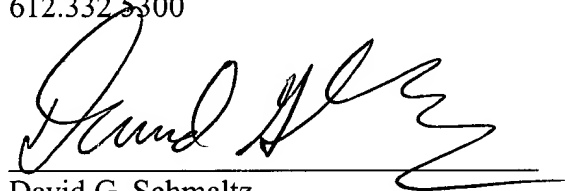
It is respectfully submitted that each of the presently pending claims (claims 22-46 and 48-55) is in condition for allowance and notification to that effect is requested. The Examiner is invited to contact Applicant's representative at the below-listed telephone number if it is believed that prosecution of this application may be assisted thereby.

Respectfully submitted,

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**VERSION WITH MARKINGS TO SHOW CHANGES MADE**

40. (Amended) A method for reducing respiratory airflow impedance in an animal, said method comprising a step of:
- adhering a support device to a first and second lateral vestibular wall overlying a first and second nasal passage of said animal and supporting a portion of said first and second lateral vestibular walls with the support device to reduce respiratory airflow impedance in said animal.
44. (Amended) A method according to claim 40 wherein said support device is a nasal support device comprising:
- a support layer to support [a] the portion of said first and second lateral vestibular wall;
- said support device configured to include:
- a first side piece for engaging said first lateral vestibular wall, said first side piece having a first rostral end, a first caudal end and a first rostral-poll dimension; and
  - a second side piece for engaging said second lateral vestibular wall, said second side piece having a second rostral end, a second caudal end and a second rostral-poll dimension; and
  - a midline region including an inner section of said first and second side pieces, said midline region having a midline rostral end, a midline caudal end and a midline region rostral-poll dimension that is at least as great as a selected one of said first and second rostral-poll dimensions.